

ONE TEAM, ONE FIGHT

MAYOR'S COLUMN

We are moving through a worldwide event that has touched each of our lives in so many different ways. It is hard to envision how COVID-19 will affect the future, but if I can make any predictions based on what I've seen already, we're going to be stronger for the experience. The way we have responded as a community is nothing short of amazing. True humanity is showing its best face. People have been helping each other and looking after loved ones and neighbors during this health crisis. People have been, for the most part, respectful and compliant with the new rules for personal safety.

No one could have prepared us for this; this unprecedented pause in a typically fast-paced world. Kids not at school, various businesses closed through no fault of their own, churches closed, people working from home or, surprisingly, on unemployment. No weddings, no movie theatres, no haircuts, no sports. Talk about March Madness.

We are starting to move to the other side of this, heading back to work and back to life, but things will be different than before. It will take time and hard work to get us back to whatever the new normal looks like. We're definitely on a speed-learning curve to find new ways to accomplish things.

Our fundamental purpose in government is to serve you. The Police, Fire, Street & Sanitation, and Wastewater Treatment departments are here for you to keep West Lafayette safe and functioning. All other City employees are working (from home) on programs and buildings and future events for when we get a green light to proceed. Please reach out to any department via the website, wl.in.gov, if you have a concern or question.



City Clerk Sana Booker and Mayor John Dennis embody the spirit of the City at a pre-COVID 19 social event.

As we navigate through this new territory, I encourage you to keep the faith. Continue to support local businesses; they are our lifeblood. Please be flexible and patient and willing to help each other out. Meet your neighbors. Wash your hands, cover your sneezes and coughs, and stay home if you're sick. Practice social distancing, but be social. We're in this together, and together we will not only survive, but thrive. We are one team in one fight. It's been an honor to be a citizen of West Lafayette and a greater honor to be your Mayor.

PHONE CALLS FROM SANA

Not to be mistaken for *Santa*, you may have received a 'well check' phone call from City Clerk Sana Booker. If not, you will soon if you are on the City's wastewater customer list. Sana is making personal phone calls to keep in touch with the community, at a pace of 47 names a day. She wants citizens to know that the City is thinking of you, wants to see if

you are okay, and if there is anything we can do. You matter. Ideas on how to get food and referrals to social services are shared. Most of the time, the calls are welcome conversations about families, hobbies, or whatever comes to mind. The responses to her phone calls have been overwhelmingly positive. Reaching out to others during a crisis is a top priority for West Lafayette.



CITY HALL CARRIES ON

Construction projects are deemed essential work by the Governor; thus, the rebuilding of the future Margerum Government and Community Center carries on. To protect the workers and maintain the best practices for wellness, the construction management team added more handwashing and hand sanitizer stations, enforces social distancing, and requires sick workers to stay home.

The extra precautions are paying off, and the building has undergone significant changes in the last months. The critical project of removing loadbearing walls and installing new steel beams to support both floors of the building is now complete. The next steps are to install architecturally-appropriate windows



Insider's view of City Hall at mid-construction

and repair any exterior masonry to comply with its status of being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Interior work of putting in plumbing, electricity, and HVAC systems are next on the docket before offices and community spaces can be created. The building is on pace to open in December 2020.

I would like to thank my arms for always being by my side, my legs for always supporting me, and my fingers ... because I can always count on them!

Unattributed

IT'S NOT TOO LATE TO BE COUNTED

The U.S. Census is still underway. There is still time to mail in your form or reply online to my2020census.gov if you have not yet responded. It takes 10 minutes and will impact local funding for 10 years. Those who do not respond will be visited in person by U.S. Census workers (who will exercise safe and social distancing). Thanks for making a difference!

LET THERE BE LIGHT

A neighborhood lighting pilot is underway to replace outdated fixtures and shed light on darkened mid-blocks or intersections within the City. The initiative began in New Chauncey with the installation of attractive LED downcast lighting, reflecting the architectural style of the neighborhood. The next area to receive new lighting is along Salisbury Street and on Stadium Avenue between Rose and Grant streets. Streets with the heaviest pedestrian traffic have the greatest need and are a top priority for further illumination.



CITY NEWS

NEW HIRES

Adam Arnold

Entry Level Firefighter
West Lafayette Fire

Derek Burge

Maintenance
Water Resource Recovery

William Cline

Help Desk Specialist
IT

Chad Dillon

Driver/Collector/Processor
Street and Sanitation

Katy Kincaid

Aquatics Coordinator
Parks and Recreation

Mitchell Lankford

City Engineer
Engineering

Kelsey Lopez

HR Assistant
Human Resources

Rachel MacDougall

Wellness Coordinator
Parks and Recreation

Samir Patel

Operator
Water Resource Recovery

Kevin Phillips

Operator
Water Resource Recovery

Bryant Smith

Senior IT Specialist
IT

Christopher Speers

Lab Technician
Water Resource Recovery

Heather Wiltse

Membership and Marketing
Director
Parks and Recreation



FARMERS MARKET UPDATE – NEW HOURS, NEW GUIDELINES

Wednesdays | 3:30 – 6 pm (3:30 – 4:30 pm for 65 + or with chronic conditions)

The West Lafayette Farmers Market is poised to open on May 6 to sell fresh fruits and vegetables, meat, dairy, flowers, honey, eggs, and pet food. To comply with Tippecanoe County Health Department directives, the WLFM will have a limited list of vendors and shortened hours until June 3. All safety initiatives (social distancing, handwashing stations, one-way traffic through the market to prevent congregation) will be exercised to bring our community the freshest food in an outdoor environment. Thank you for your patience during this time. Please check the West Lafayette Farmers Market Facebook page for current information and safety guidelines.

BAD NEWS PEARS

The once beautiful, but sterile, Bradford Pear tree has evolved into an invasive species that out-competes and endangers native trees. Think of how Honeysuckles invaded and crowded out other species. In addition to threatening native trees, Bradford Pear (Callery) trees displace pollinators and other wildlife that are vital to ensure a sustainable ecosystem. But help is on its way for West Lafayette residents. If you live within West Lafayette city limits, have a Bradford Pear street tree, and are interested in a replacement, please contact Bryce Patz, urban forester, at bpatz@wl.in.gov or 765-775-5160. Trees will be removed and replaced over multiple planting seasons.



E-LEARNING RESOURCES

WLCSC Superintendent Rocky Killion and his staff shared the following information to help you help your children succeed in their studies while at home.

The Indiana Department of Education has developed a webpage for remote learning that allows parents and educators to search for eLearning resources by grade level and content area. Resources are added weekly on Thursdays, and parents are encouraged to visit doe.in.gov/covid-19/resources to access these resources.

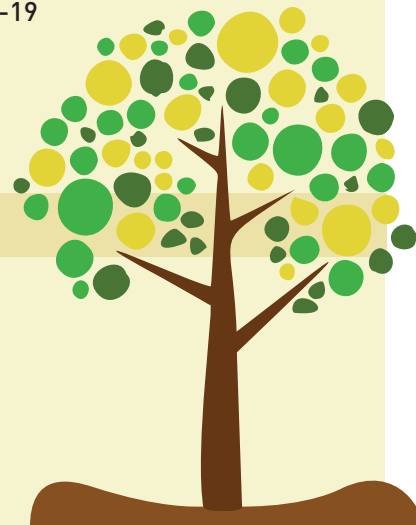
Both Tippecanoe School Corporation and West Lafayette Community School Corporation have developed webpages for parents to access information related to COVID-19, including eLearning resources, food services, and health resources. We encourage parents to visit these pages regularly for updated information:

WLCSC wl.k12.in.us/covid-19

TSC tsc.k12.in.us/covid19

TREE MULCHING 101

Donuts are better than volcanoes. Everyone should know that already, but it is especially true when it comes to how you mulch around a tree. Creating a volcano mound around a tree causes the root systems to choke, provides a ripe environment for fungus and bacteria growth, and weakens the tree. A donut-shaped application (with no mulch touching the tree trunk) allows it to retain moisture while combating weed growth and protecting the roots. For all tree care tips, see arborday.org/trees/tips/.



Donut-shaped application of mulch.

SEASONAL STORYTIME IN NATURE

Take a walk in the wild and enjoy a read-aloud children's story at the same time. The Celery Bog Nature Area is part of the nationwide StoryWalk® project which spans all 50 states and 12 countries. The spring book selection is *Shake a Leg, Egg* by Kurt Cyrus. It is a story of a gosling's entrance into the world. It is full of gorgeously illustrated birds in a setting very much like the Celery Bog. The rhythmic text is full of repeating sounds and reads aloud beautifully. The StoryWalk® begins in the grassy area to the right of the Lilly Center. Each laminated page is attached to a tree and the story winds from tree-to-tree along the trail.

The book takes 10-30 minutes to read, depending on your pace. Books will be changed seasonally. What a wonderful way to weave stories into your family nature walks.



NEW FACES IN GREEN SPACES

A new internship program began this year to assist with the upkeep and development of public green spaces in the City of West Lafayette. The Urban Landscape Stewardship program is for college students enrolled in a curriculum focused on horticulture, landscape architecture, parks and recreation, land conservation, or other related fields of study. They will focus on urban areas and public medians within City limits, especially Chauncey Village and downtown area. These stewards will also aid the West Lafayette Tree Friends with tree watering, pruning, and mulching. If you see these young leaders hitting the greens, say hello!

Hello!



WELLNESS CENTER UPDATE

Construction is underway and right on schedule for the new Wellness Center, due to open in early January 2021. The 73,000 SF building will include three gyms, three group exercise studios, three community rooms, a pool, an indoor playground, and a 7,000 SF fitness center. Windows will provide views overlooking Cumberland Park, the pond, and the community gardens to bring the outside in. Daily rates and membership packages will be determined in the coming months, but, rest assured, there will be opportunities for the public to tour the facility and participate in free community events. Three new positions (membership and marketing director, aquatics coordinator, and wellness coordinator) were filled to help develop programs and manage the facility.

Until the Wellness Center is finished, Parks and Recreation Director Kathy Lozano suggests getting outside and enjoying nature. Physical activity is especially important to help reduce stress, increase health and wellbeing, and connect with others – even if it is at a distance of 6 feet away. Responsible use of the City's parks and 34 miles of beautiful trails is the best prescription for overall health.

Sunlight illuminates Wellness Center construction



MAY IS NATIONAL BIKE MONTH. This opportunity may never come again to bike on unusually empty streets. At least, we hope not. However, while this is the case, it is the perfect time to hit the trails and bike lanes with your friends and family. Biking is a great exercise that keeps you safely distant from companions. Check out wl.in.gov under Engineering to discover bike maps, bike clubs, and bicycle-friendly businesses. There's even a video for essential bicycling skills and bike safety tips. Two miles of a new multi-use trail is being built along Salisbury Street (north from Cumberland to Kalberer), and Grant Street (from Salisbury to Northwestern Avenue) to better accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians on the north side of campus. Enjoy spring and summer biking with the sun on your face and the wind in your hair.



MENTAL WELLNESS TIPS

Your mental health is as important as your physical health. Knowing the warning signs of stress-related disorders are essential during these unprecedented times. Mental health professionals site feelings of being overwhelmed, inability or loss of interest in doing normal activities, excessive fatigue, eating too much or too little, sleeping too much or too little, increased substance use or abuse, guilt, lack of concentration, and depression as warning signs to seek professional help.

If you're experiencing these symptoms, call your doctor or 211 for social services referrals. Many doctors offer telemedicine visits, and several health providers can give you a free assessment. Mental health emergency rooms are open during the health crisis, including Franciscan's EmPATH, IU Health, and Sycamore Springs. In case of an emergency, call 911.

For DIY help, exercise your brain and body, and reach out to friends and family for conversation and social support. Eat healthy meals, take deep breaths, stretch, meditate or pray, sleep. Find a way to help others. Take time to take care of yourself.



SOME MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCES:

The Tippecanoe Crisis Line is open 24/7
Crisis Hotline: 765/742-0244
Information and referral number: 765/423-2255

IU Health Arnett and **Mental Health America of Tippecanoe County** partnered on a texting-based counseling session:
SAFE2TALK sent to 765/742-0244.

Mental Health America of Wabash Valley: mhawv.org.

SAMHSA's (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's) Disaster Distress Helpline: 800/985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746.

Sycamore Springs 765/637-0180

River Bend Hospital 765/464-0400

NAMI (National Alliance on Mental Illness) West Central: FYI warning signs and symptoms and hotline: 800/950-nami or text Nami to 741741.

CDC.gov has a stress and coping section for daily life.

DUMPSTER MOMENT

The unexpected staycation caused by recent events has given many residents the time and opportunity to do some serious spring cleaning.

TAKE NOTE: The Street and Sanitation Department will pick up only one (1) large item in addition to the approved trash cans each week. Consider taking unwanted items to a charity if they're in good shape.

For unusually large amounts of household rubbish generated by spring cleaning, moving, or house renovations, you can now rent a City dumpster. Guidelines for unacceptable items can be found at wl.in.gov in the Street and Sanitation Department under Garbage Disposal. Dumpsters are available for seven (7) day rental periods; a 30-yard dumpster costs \$350 per week, which includes delivery, pickup, and landfill fees. A rental agreement form is available on the City website. To reserve one, please call **(765) 775-5242**.

Thanks to Pinterest, I now get up at the crack of dawn on trash day to scout the neighborhood for mason jars, wine bottles, and furniture to repurpose.

Unattributed

TRASH CAN RECALL

Do you recall being asked to replace your non-compliant trash can? **The grace period has elapsed.** According to 2013 City Ordinance 32-27: *Approved waste containers need to be of a galvanized metal or rigid plastic that is leakproof, has two handles, includes a metal bale (where the trash truck lifts it into the truck), is watertight with a tightfitting lid, has a capacity of no more than 96 gallons, and is kept in a sanitary condition.*

The Street and Sanitation Department needs your help and cooperation. Non-compliant containers cannot be picked up by the truck; thus putting employees at risk for back injuries besides potential infection.

Luckily for everyone, there is a simple solution. The City sells 32, 48, or 96-gallon garbage toters that are the best value you can find in any store. They are sturdy, have an attractive black lid to complement the yellow-lidded recycling toter, and come with a 12-year warranty. Prices vary from \$54.78 - \$69.55. To order a new garbage toter, please go online to wl.in.gov under the Street and Sanitation Department. Once your payment is received, your new toter will be delivered to your door. To repurpose your old trash can, use it to hold yard waste! Thank you for helping keep the City clean and beautiful.



I have never been remotely ashamed of having been depressed. Never. What's there to be ashamed of? I went through a really rough patch, and I am quite proud that I got out of that.

J.K. Rowling

John Dennis • Mayor
765/775-5100
mayor@wl.in.gov

Sana Booker • Clerk
765/775-5150
clerk@wl.in.gov

wl.in.gov

West Lafayette City Hall
1200 N. Salisbury Street
West Lafayette, IN 47906

Celery Bog

Committed to Going Greener



A Tree City USA



LET'S GO EVENT CALENDAR

Rx/OTC Take-Back

2nd Thursday / 11:30 am – 1:30 pm
May 14 / June 11 / July 9
West Lafayette Police Station

City Offices Closed

Monday / May 25 / Memorial Day
Friday / July 3 / Independence Day
Monday / Sept. 7 / Labor Day

West Lafayette Farmers Market

Wednesday / May – October
3:30 – 6 pm (3:30 – 4:30 pm for 65+ or
with chronic conditions)
Cumberland Park

“As we navigate
through this
new territory,
I encourage
you to keep the
faith. Continue
to support local
businesses;
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John Dennis

Wednesdays in the Wild

Wednesdays / 1 – 3 pm
Lilly Nature Center
Westlafayette.in.gov/parks

Stars & Stripes

Saturday / July 4
Reihle Plaza / Downtown Lafayette

Wabash Riverfest

Saturday / July 11 / 9 am – 4 pm
Tapawingo Park

Tippecanoe County 4-H Fair

July 18 – 25
Tippecanoe County
Fairgrounds

